

Rowell House
Gull Pond Road
Wellfleet
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-777

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THE ROWELL HOUSE

HABS No. MA-777

Location: On Gull Pond Road, 1 mile east of U.S. Highway No. 6.
Wellfleet, Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Present Owner: Miss Clara Rowell.
Gull Pond Road, Wellfleet, Massachusetts.

Present Occupants: Miss Clara Rowell and Miss Charlotte Rowell.

Present Use: Permanent residence.

Significance: A very interesting example of an early Cape Cod "house" or 1/2 house. Ernest Allen Connally, HABS Architect and historian stated that this was the most archaic type he saw during his survey of Cape Cod houses in the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and subsequent owners Dr. Connally found that Rader was the owner as shown by a wall map of 1853, based on a survey of 1843 ff. Also, according to the Barnstable County Atlas, 1880, Walter Henderson was the owner. Miss Rowell's father was the owner before her. The dates of ownership have not been determined.

Date of erection Verbally dated about 1731 according to Dr. Connally, and to him, the house appears mid 18th century.

Architect Unknown.

Builder Unknown.

Original plans of construction None known to exist.

Alterations and additions Practically none.

Historical events connected with structure None discovered to date.

Important old views Miss Rowell has an old picture showing the house when her father owned it.

Sources of information Miss Clara Rowell.

Likely sources not yet investigated Wellfleet Town Records; Barnstable County Records, although these are incomplete prior to 1827 due to

the court house fire in that year. Also, further information can probably be had from the Misses Rowell at a later date. In the summer of 1960, one or both have a reluctance to have the house measured and drawn for HABS.

Prepared by

Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
August 24, 1960

References: Work sheet by Dr. Ernest Allen Connally on his survey of the house during the summer of 1959.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit Probably the oldest house in Wellfleet, certainly the most archaic type according to Dr. Connally.

Condition of fabric Good.

THE EXTERIOR

Overall dimensions 26'-6" x 27'-0".

Foundations Brick.

Wall construction Vertical planks on heavy timber frame, shingled exterior, lath and plaster interior. Exposure to weather: 5".

Openings - doorways and doors 4 panel front door, wood.

windows and shutters 9/6 panes in wood double hung sash, lights are 6" x 8". 6/6 at rear of house and 4/4 in buttry. 2/2 in small window at west end of house, second floor.

Roof shape, covering, construction Fitched, gabled, wood shingles; hewn trusses, purlins, no rafters.

cornice, eaves Wood box cornice, narrow eaves.

dormers None.

Chimneys One central stack, brick, over west part of house.

THE INTERIOR

Floor plan The front door on the south leads into a small entry with a door leading into the east room and with the stairs to the second floor running to the north off of the entry. The east room is two windowed. Back of it is the original kitchen and the buttery and small bed room to the east of the kitchen. An exterior door also leads into the west part of the kitchen from the south, in the part that extends past the main part of the house. The attic is unfinished, whitewashed with beams exposed.

Stairs One, very steep, from entry.

Floor Random width pine.

Wall and ceiling finish Plaster, wainscoting in front room, with summer beam and plates exposed. Beaded edge, mouldings, appear early 18th century.

Doorways and doors Not known.

Trim Simple 18th century type, mitered.

Hardware HL hinges, appear old.

Lighting Unknown.

Heating Unknown.

SITE

Orientation The house faces south in typical Cape Cod manner, at the end of a small lane leading from Gull Pond Road. It is in the lee of a hill, which is also typical Cape Cod style.

Enclosures No fences, some shrubs.

Outbuildings No originals survive.

Walks, driveways Oyster shell drive from road.

Landscaping This house is set in an open area surrounded by trees. The trees and shrubs are planted informally.

Prepared by Ernest Allen Connally
and Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts, Architect
HABS Cape Cod Survey I
August 24, 1960